

DeWalt Cross-Line Green Laser

DeWalt DW088LG
Cross-Line Green Laser
Range: 100 feet, visual;
165 feet with DW0892G
detector (not included)
Accuracy: $\pm 1/8$ inch at 33 feet
Self-leveling range: ± 4 degrees
Battery runtime: 8 to 14 hours
Weight with battery: 1 pound
14 ounces
Price: \$350
Includes: one 2-Ah battery,
charger, drop-ceiling attach-
ment, plastic case

by Bruce Greenlaw

Green-beam construction lasers are up to four times easier to see than red ones, but until recently, the intricate diodes that projected them were too pricey and power-hungry to go mainstream. Thanks to a recent technical breakthrough, though, true green semiconductor diodes are now available that cost less and are more efficient than their predecessors. That's why a bunch of new green-beam point, line, and rotary lasers have recently hit the market. I tested the DeWalt DW088LG cross-line green laser, a member of the company's 12V MAX cordless family of line lasers (I also tested the red-beam version, the DW088LR).

Line Coverage

Cross-line lasers project a horizontal and vertical line either independently

or together so they intersect. According to DeWalt, the horizontal line of the DW088LG fans out at least 100 degrees and the vertical line at least 130 degrees.

Like most competing lasers, the DW088LG uses an internal pendulum to self-level. The base of the laser must be within about 4 degrees of level for the pendulum to work. If the inclination is between 4 and 10 degrees, the beams flash once per second to indicate that you're outside the self-leveling range. Exceed 10 degrees, and the lines quickly blink three times about every six seconds, projecting uninterrupted layout lines for five seconds between each series of blinks. According to DeWalt, the reduced blinking is designed to be less distracting for when you tilt your laser to project sloped layout lines, such as for setting stair rails or angled tile. To help prevent shock damage, the pendulum automatically locks when you switch off the tool.

Before using the laser, I checked its plumb and level lines for accuracy. It was good to go.

Green vs. Red

According to the specs, the green-beam laser has a visual range of up to 100 feet, twice the range of its red-beam sibling. I tried both in a variety of interior spaces, and the green beam was clearly brighter. The difference was especially pronounced in a kitchen and a utility room that were brightly lit by overhead fluorescent fixtures.

Outdoors on a fairly bright but drizzly day, I was surprised that I could easily find the green beam on yellow metal siding with the laser placed 50 feet away (in comparison, the red beam virtually disappeared at 25 feet). On a sunlit wall,



I could barely even see the green beam with the laser placed just 5 feet away. The pulsed green beam, however, allows you to use a detector to locate the lines when they're too faint to see. DeWalt's DW0892G green-line detector extends the working range to 165 feet. I've seen one online for less than \$100. Also available are green-laser-enhancement glasses, but they have minimal impact in direct sunlight.

Runtime

The laser comes in a kit that includes a drop-ceiling attachment, a blow-mold case, a 12V MAX 2-amp-hour battery, and a charger.

Despite the breakthrough in green-diode technology, green lasers still draw a lot more power than red ones. While the DW088LR red laser delivers 12 to 27 hours of runtime on AA batteries, the DW088LG would deliver only 4½ to 6½ hours of runtime on AAs. With a 12V MAX battery, on the other hand, it delivers 8 to 14 hours. This battery takes about 1½ hours to fully recharge, but can power the laser all day on one charge, so that's a small issue. There's an excellent four-bar battery gauge on board.



Other Highlights

The laser is mounted to an L-shaped bracket that lets it rotate 360 degrees on its vertical axis (see photo, above), which can be a blessing for aiming layout lines. The bracket has ¼-20 and ⅝-11 sockets on the bottom for tripods and laser poles, and two mighty rare-earth magnets on the back that stick to a metal strip on the drop-ceiling attachment and to other ferrous metal. The bracket can also hang from a nail or screw.

The laser is built to be exceptionally rugged. DeWalt says it tested shock resistance by dropping it onto concrete from a height of 1½ to 2 meters with the pendulum locked. It also has an Ingress Protection rating of IP65, which

means that it's dust-proof and won't be damaged by rain.

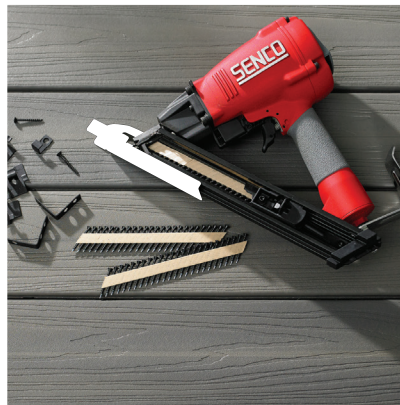
The Bottom Line

I wish DeWalt would provide a padded pouch that slipped onto a toolbelt for added convenience and protection on site. But overall I'm impressed. The laser is economical, easy to use, and rugged, and—unlike competing lasers—belongs to a cordless platform. You can use it indoors for setting everything from windows, doors, and cabinets to tile, electrical boxes, and suspended ceilings. Add a detector, and you can easily use it outdoors for decks, fences, and more.

I'd be perfectly happy with the red-beam laser, until the first time I struggled to see my layout lines. Then I'd regret not buying the brighter green version. While it costs \$150 more than the red version, the kit includes a 12V MAX battery and charger (the red-laser kit doesn't, which partly accounts for its lower price). It comes with a 3-year warranty and a 90-day money-back guarantee.

Bruce Greenlaw is a contributing editor to JLC and Tools of the Trade, where a version of this article originally appeared.

Senco SHD150XP Deck Clip Tool



Senco's SHD150XP pneumatic nailer is designed for installing Mantis hidden deck clips (senco.com). A rare-earth magnet in the nose piece holds the clip in place, and an aluminum slide attachment guides deck clips into the proper position for installation. The paper-collated fasteners used in the tool are driven like nails and have square-drive heads so that they can be backed out like a screw if needed. The driver weighs 4.6 pounds, features a dry-fire lockout, and has an

adjustable rafter hanger. It carries a five-year guarantee and is available on line for about \$300.

Mantis clips are available in three common groove heights to fit most brands of grooved decking. The clips are designed to lift the deck board off the joist slightly to provide airflow and prevent water from being trapped between the bottom of the decking and tops of the joists. ❖

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